

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MTN GE 05578 141451Z

44

ACTION STR-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 STRE-00 AGR-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FRB-03 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05

CIEP-01 SS-15 ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02

FEAE-00 OMB-01 AF-08 ARA-06 EUR-12 NEA-10 /136 W

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P R 141359Z JUL 76

FM USDEL MTN GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1751

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE USDEL MTN GENEVA 5578

H PASS CODEL

STR FOR ACTION

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD MTN

SUBJECT: TROPICAL PRODUCTS CONSULTATION -PHILIPPINES

REF: MTN GENEVA 412

1. SUMMARY: BILATERAL TROPICAL PRODUCTS CONSULTATION
HELD AT REQUEST OF AMBASSADOR VEGA SUBSEQUENT TO PLENARY
SESSION OF GROUP TROPICAL PRODUCTS. MTN DEL BEGAN BY
REITERATING US POSITION THAT REQUEST FOR PHILIPPINE
CONTRIBUTIONS TO TROPICAL PRODUCTS NEGOTIATIONS WERE
IDENTICAL TO REQUESTS MADE BY THE US IN THE CONTEXT OF
CURRENT BILATERAL ECONOMIC DISCUSSIONS. AMBASSADOR
VEGA PRESSED DURING THE CONSULTATION FOR IDENTIFICATION
OF VARIOUS PRODUCTS WHERE US MIGHT IMPROVE ITS OFFER;
INDICATED THAT GOP WAS CONSIDERING DUTY REDUCTIONS ON
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PAGE 02 MTN GE 05578 141451Z

THE 13 ITEMS THEY HAD PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED IN

BILATERAL TALKS FOR POSSIBLE BINDING; AND STATED PHILIPPINES WOULD SEEK PLURILATERAL CONSULTATIONS UNDER THE PROCEDURES OF THE TROPICAL PRODUCTS GROUP ON PINEAPPLE PRODUCTS AND COCONUT OIL. END SUMMARY

2. US MTN DEL (GRAEF AND LANDE) MET WITH PHILIPPINE MTN DEL (VEGA, GARCIA AND SANTIAGO) ON JULY 2, FOLLOWING TP GROUP MEETING. AMBASSADOR VEGA IN HIS USUAL FASHION ASKED A NUMBER OF HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS RELATED TO MAINTENANCE OF THE US OFFER. VEGA SOUGHT INFORMATION ON WHETHER US WOULD PROCEED WITH INDIVIDUAL ITEMS UNDER ITS OFFER IF THE PRINCIPAL SUPPLIER DID NOT CONTRIBUTE. MTN DEL REPLIED THAT OFFERS THAT REQUIRED SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED CITING EXAMPLE OF US CONCESSION ON COCONUT OIL TIED TO PHILIPPINE CONCESSION ON SOYBEAN PRODUCTS. ON OTHER PRODUCTS US MTN DEL INDICATED THAT US WAS AWAITING RESPONSES FROM ALL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BEFORE ASSESSING ITS TOTAL OFFER. NONE-THELESS MTN DEL POINTED TO THE FACT THAT PHILIPPINES WAS PRINCIPAL SUPPLIER ON SEVERAL ITEMS ON THE US OFFER, DESPITE THE FACT IT HAD NOT REQUESTED CONCESSIONS ON SEVERAL OF THESE ITEMS, AND THUS PHILIPPINE POSITION ON CONTRIBUTIONS WOULD BE AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN US DECISION.

3. VEGA THEN INDICATED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY FOR HIM TO HAVE BETTER IDEA OF POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS TO US OFFER BEFORE SERIOUSLY ANALYZING POSSIBLE PHILIPPINE CONTRIBUTIONS. RESPONDING ON A PRODUCT BASIS MTN DEL REPEATED INFORMATION IT HAD PREVIOUSLY GIVEN VEGA IN PRELIMINARY SUBSTANTIVE REACTION ROUND KREF CABLE). VEGA INDICATED THAT OF ITEMS US DID NOT RESPOND TO ON PHILIPPINE REQUEST LIST, PINEAPPLES WERE OF HIGHEST PRIORITY. HE INDICATED HE WOULD SEEK A PLURILATERAL CONSULTATION ON PINEAPPLES AND COCONUT OIL IN ORDER TO PUT PRESSURE ON US AND TO ASSESS THE OPENNESS OF OTHER LDCE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE TP NEGOTIATIONS.

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PAGE 03 MTN GE 05578 141451Z

4. WITH RESPECT TO PHILIPPINE CONTRIBUTIONS, VEGA INDICATED THAT HIS AUTHORITIES WERE CONSIDERING DUTY REDUCTIONS ON THE 13 ITEMS THEY HAD PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED IN BILATERAL TALKS FOR POSSIBLE BINDING. HE INDICATED THAT THESE 13 ITEMS COVERED OVER \$200,000,000 WITH US TRADE. HE OBSERVED THAT US REQUESTS FOR DUTY REDUCTIONS ON SPECIFIC INDUSTRIAL ITEMS WERE ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT FOR THE PHILIPPINES

IN THE CONTEXT OF THE TP NEGOTIATIONS SINCE THEY IN NO WAY COULD BE CONSTRUED TROPICAL PRODUCTS. HE INQUIRED WHETHER A MORE GENERAL CONTRIBUTION SUCH AS STREAMLINING CUSTOM PROCEDURES WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. MTN DEL RESPONDED THAT PHILIPPINES HAD RECEIVED THE US REQUEST LIST, WHICH WAS NOT A SHOPPING LIST, BUT THAT IN THE NEGOTIATION PROPOSALS AND COUNTERPROPOSALS COULD BE MADE.

5. WITH RESPECT TO THE BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS, VEGA INDICATED THAT IT WAS HIS PERSONAL DESIRE TO REOPEN THE TALKS IN SEPTEMBER IN THE PHILIPPINES. HE INDICATED HIS AUTHORITIES WERE CONSIDERING THE LATTER PAART OF SEPTEMBER.

6. REQUESTED ACTION: MTN DEL BELIEVES PLURIALATERAL CONSULTATIONS ON EITHER PINEAPPLES OR COCONUT OIL WOULD BE APPROPRIATE AND USEFUL AT THIS TIME. WE BELIEVE THAT PLURILATERAL CONSULTATIONS ON COCONUT OIL WOULD DEMONSTRATE TO ALL PARTICIPANTS THAT VALUE OF THE CONCESSION TO THE PHILIPPINES ON THIS PRODUCT IS SO SIGNIFICANT THAT ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE NEGOTIATIONS IS APPROPRIATE AND NECESSARY. WITH RESPECT TO PINEAPPLES SEVERAL POINTS COULD BE MADE. US CONTINUES TO BE A MAJOR PRODUCER OF PINEAPPLE PRODUCTS; PINEAPPLES ARE A CLEARLY SENSITIVE PRODUCT IN OUR MARKET; BASED ON THE APPROACH OF OTHER DCS IN THE TP GROUP THE US, WHICH EXPORTS THESE PRODUCTS, WILL LOSE MARKET ACCESS; THE COMBINATION FO SENSITIVITY ON THE PRODUCT AND THE ABSENCE OF A FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE ON CONTRIBUTIONS FROM COUNTRIES THAT BENEFIT FORM US CONCESSIONS PLUS THE FACT THAT MARKET ACCESS IS BEING ADDRESSED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 MTN GE 05578 141451Z

ON A PREFERENTIAL BASIS RATHER THAN A GLOBAL BASIS MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE US TO RESPOND ON THIS PRODUCT IN THIS GROUP. OBVIOUSLY THE SAME CONSTRAINTS WILL APPLY DURING THE MTN ON THIS PRODUCT. REQUEST WASHINGTON PREPARATION OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR POSSIBLE PLURILATERALS ON THESE PRODUCTS.CULBERT

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